

Chelsea Massey
Education Committee Testimony
RE: Education Funding Bills SB 948, SB 949 and SB 886
Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Chelsea Massey and I am a Middletown resident. I am also an educator at Brass City Charter School in Waterbury. Growing up, education was extremely important in my family; I was pushed to achieve my potential and pursue higher education. Now, as a teacher, I realize that because of my education I am better able to participate fully in communities I am a part - both here in Middletown where I live, and in Waterbury where I work.

I am here today to speak with you about school funding. More specifically, fair and equitable school funding that addresses the long standing racial and economic inequities that plague Connecticut schools.

School funding should provide significant additional resources for low-income students. It costs more to educate low-income students and provide them with a robust education. To overcome issues of poverty, low-income students need significant additional funds. Research shows that increases in school spending result in greater educational and economic outcomes for all students, but these were "more pronounced for children from low-income families." Additional funding should help to attract highly qualified teachers, improve curriculum, and fund additional programs, and make the school community a refined demonstration of how we want our younger generation to function and live in the world.

Governor Lamont recently proposed bringing the per-pupil spending for charter school students to the minimum education funding limit of \$11,525. This is an important step towards rectifying the longstanding injustices our low-income kids of color who attend one of Connecticut public charter schools face. However, as I stated earlier, the research shows that children in low-income communities need more than the minimum to be successful. I am here today to ask that you apply the weighted funding for low-income, english language learners and students living in concentrated poverty to ALL students - including my students who attend a public charter school.

Please continue pushing for funding solutions that close the racial funding gap once and for all. With more, we do more and give more. Children are like banks, the more we put in, the more we can withdraw. They are the future and we are their shepherds.

Thank you for your time.

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